

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the language of claim 17 by specifying that the one or more hormones is 2,4-D at the specified concentration and kinetin at the specified concentration.

In view of the amendment to claim 1, claim 17 has been canceled and claim 18 has been amended to depend from claim 1.

It is submitted that these amendments do not constitute new matter, and their entry is requested.

Allowable Claims

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that (a) claims 17-19 and 21-30 are free of the prior art, (b) claims 17-18 and 21-22 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form and (c) claims 19 and 23-30 are allowable.

Rejection Under 35 USC § 103(a)

Claims 1-14 and 20 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Rangan et al. (US 5,859,321) in view of Strickland (WO 97/12512). Although Applicants do not agree with the Examiner's characterization of the teachings of the prior art and their rendering of the claimed subject matter obvious, Applicants have nevertheless amended claim 1 to include hormones and hormone concentrations as set forth in claim 17, which the Examiner indicated was free of the prior art and allowable. It is believed that the amendment of claim 1 in this manner obviates this rejection.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present invention is not obvious from the cited prior art. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Conclusions

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that the claims satisfy the requirements of the patent statutes and reconsideration of the instant application and early notice of

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allowance are requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if it is deemed to expedite allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,
ROTHWELL, FIGG, ERNST & MANBECK, p.c.

By /Jeffrey L. Ihnen/
Jeffrey L. Ihnen
Registration No. 28,957
Attorney for Applicants
1425 K Street, N.W., Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone No.: (202) 783-6040
Facsimile No.: (202) 783-6031

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